

Is He at the Door?

BY MRS. MULOCK CRAIK.

Oh! Great Master, are thy footsteps
Even now upon the mountains?
Art thou walking in thy wheat-field?
Are the snowy-winged reapers
Gathering in the silent air?

Are thy signs abroad, the glowing
Of the distant sky blood-reddened,
And the near fields trodden, blighted,
Choked by gaudy tares triumphant?
Sure it must be harvest time!

Who shall know the Master's coming?
Whether it be dawn or sunset,
When night dews weigh down the wheat-ears,
Or while moon rides high in heaven,
Sleeping lies the yellow field.

Only may thy voice, Good Master,
Peal above the reapers' chorus,
And dull sound of leaves slow falling:
"Gather all into my garner,
For it is the harvest time!"

Paul's Example.

MRS. W. C. PERRY.

Read at the prayer-meeting, Ashland, January 11th 1885.

Paul, after having exhorted the Ephesian elders and brethren to faithfulness and watchfulness, speaks of his own life among them. Acts 20: 33-35. He speaks thus, not in terms of exaltation, but because he well knew that example is better than precept; and as this was the last interview he ever expected to have with his friends here, this being his final farewell, he wished to make his teachings just as impressive as possible.

What a bright example of an earnest, unselfish life this noble apostle showed! What a mighty influence he wielded through his recognized fidelity and his warm-hearted devotion to those under his charge! His whole soul seemed to be absorbed in the promotion of their spiritual welfare, while for his own temporal gain he gave but little thought. He says, "I have coveted no man's silver or gold or apparel." He did not even ask for support for himself, (although he did insist upon it for others. 1 Cor. 9: 14.) but in order that no one might blame him with self-seeking, he labored with his own hands, and as he held out those toil-hardened hands, no one could lay a lost soul of careless life at his door. How truthfully it has been said, that "the logic of a man's life is far mightier than any silver-tongued eloquence. He may talk like a seraph about the excellence of religion, the value of faith, the beauty of virtue, but if his life is evil, if he is loose, time-serving, inconsistent, he kills his own arguments faster than he can state them.

Another prominent lesson that is taught us in this farewell address, is the blessing attendant upon serving others. Paul says it is more blessed to give than to receive. Perhaps this may explain our Savior's temper of serene satisfaction in the work he came on earth to do. He was always giving, therefore always blessed, and perhaps happier than we generally deem Him when we speak of Him as a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. Paul would not have us infer that there is no blessing attendant upon the reception; but while it is more blessed to give, it is still a blessing to receive. No man surely would willingly close one available avenue between himself and heaven. We should accept all of heaven's rich gifts with a spirit of gratitude, and at the same time be willing to give to others such things as have been given us; stooping to lift the fallen one; for it is written, whoever would be chief among you let him be your servant. That is Christ's system of aristocracy. We may not be able to do great deeds, or give great gifts, but that need not discourage us. They are little things that make up the sum of human happiness. Jesus only asks of us that which we can do: remember the widow's mite. Again, he has promised a blessing upon even a cup of cold water given in his name.

And although like in the case of Paul partings will come in this life, it is an unspeakable comfort to know that Christians never see each other for the last time.

Popular with One Man.

A railway gate-keeper who, one cold night, required every passenger to show his ticket before passing through to the train, and was rewarded with considerable grumbling and protesting, was

told by Major Whittle, "You are a very unpopular man to-night."

"I only care to be popular with one man," was the reply, "and that is the superintendent." He might have pleased the passengers, disobeyed orders, and lost his position. He was too wise for that; his business was to please one man—the man who hired him, gave him his orders, and rewarded him for faithfulness, and who would discharge him for disobedience.

The servant of Christ has many opportunities to make himself unpopular. There are multitudes who would be glad to have him relax the strictness of his rules, and grant to them some indulgence which his Master forbids. If he is their servant they demand that he should consult their wishes; and if they hire him and pay him, they think they should have the right to control him. But if he serves them, he cannot serve the Lord. "No man can serve two masters." He who tries to be popular with the world, will lose his popularity with the Lord. He will make friends, but he will lose the one Friend who is above all others. He will win plaudits, but he will not hear the gracious word, "Well done!"

The servant of God should seek to be popular with one man, and that man is "the man Christ Jesus;" He who is over all, who is higher than the highest, mightier than the mightiest, and whose approval is worth more than all the world's applause, whose blessing will make us glad to all eternity.—SEL.

The Crooked Pin.

"It's only a crooked pin—throw it away!" The speaker threw it away, but I stooped to pick it up. I was just then needing a pin, and I looked at it doubtfully, bent it a little straighter with my fingers, and used it for the purpose required.

Now I am keeping the strong, straight pin which I was about to use, for something else, where a crooked pin might not do.

Ah! here is a lesson for me to learn, thought I. If we were more alive to things around us, we should be always learning—there is a sermon even in a stone. Everything has a voice, but we are so blind and deaf and self-absorbed that we do not hear.

The crooked pin told me this tale:

In the church are many crooked pins—pins which were good and strong, and ready for work till something bent them. Then they were thrown aside as unfit for service.

Sometimes, however, we see that a loving hand raises them from the dust, and gently bends them till they are nearly as strong and straight as before, puts them into some niche of service where they are as useful as ever, only needing a little tender care; not fit for the strain of hard, rough work, but forming, perhaps, the needed link in some important chain—holding stronger ones together.

Let us then be very tender not to wound each other; let no hard or unthinking hand bend another out of his right course; and if we do find one so displaced, that we gently strive to set him straight, remembering there is work to be done, even by a crooked pin.—BRITISH FRIEND.

The One Helper.

Wouldst thou have much power against sin, and much increase of holiness, let thine eye be much on Christ; set thine heart on him; let it dwell in him, and be still with him. When sin is likely to prevail in any kind, go to him, tell him of the insurrection of his enemies and thy inability to resist, and desire him to suppress and help thee against them, that they gain nothing by their stirrings but some new wound. If thy heart begin to be taken with and moved toward sin, lay it before him; the beams of his love shall eat out the fire of those sinful lusts. Wouldst thou have thy pride and passions and love of the world and self-love killed, go sue for the virtue of his death, and that will do it. Seek his Spirit, the spirit of meekness and humility and divine love. Look on him, and he will draw thy heart heavenward, and unite it to Himself, and make it like Himself. And is not that the thing thou desirest?—LEIGHTON.

How to Cure Gossip.

Adopt this rule: Let all who come to you with stories about mutual acquaintances know that you intend, as soon as your duties allow, to wait upon the parties spoken of disparagingly and repeat just what was said, and who said it. Still better, take out your memorandum-book and ask the party to allow you to copy the words, so that you can make no mistake.

You will have to do this probably not more than three times. It will fly among your acquaintances on the wings of the gossips, and persons who come to talk against other persons in your presence will begin to feel as if they were testifying under oath.

But, you ask, "Will it not be mean to go off and detail conversations?" Not at all when your interlocutor understands that he must not talk against an absent person in your presence without expecting you to convey the words to the absent person, and the name of the speaker. Moreover, what right has any man or woman to approach you and bind you to secrecy, and then poison your mind against another? If there be any difference in your obligations, are you not bound more to the man who is absent than the man who is present? If you can thus help to kill gossip it will not matter if you lose a friend or two; such friends as these, who talk against others to you, are the very persons to talk against you to them.

Try your rule. We know it to be good. We use it. It is known in the church of which we are pastor, that if any one speaks to us disparagingly of an absent member, we hold it a duty to go to that absent member immediately and report the conversation and the names; or, still better, to make the party disparaging, face the party disparaged. We have almost none of this to do. Amid the many annoyances which necessarily come to the pastor of a large church and still larger congregation, we think that we are as free from the annoyance of gossips as it is possible for a man to be who lives amongst his fellow-men.

Try our rule, try it faithfully, with meekness and charity, and if it does not work well let us know.—DR. DEEMS IN SUNDAY MAGAZINE.

Proud Cobblers.

Years ago, there was in New York city an old shoemaker who had become wealthy through his trade and investments in real estate. His daughters ambitious to move in fashionable life persuaded him, after much teasing and coaxing, to set up a carriage. They then asked that a coat of arms should be painted upon the carriage door.

"Yes," said the old man, with that grim humor characteristic of the craft, "you may have a coat-of-arms, but it must be one of my own designing. You may paint a lapstone supported by an awl and a hammer."

The shoemaker's daughters continued to ride in a carriage not decorated with a coat-of-arms. But what they would not allow their father to do—to tell the story of his business upon his carriage—a London shoemaker did do. His name was James Lackington, and he added to the profits of his cobbler's stall by selling a few second hand books. Abandoning shoe-making for book-selling, his success was such that in a few years he was owner of what he called "the cheapest book-shop in the world," in which half a million of volumes were offered for sale. His method of doing business was peculiar to himself. "I found the whole of what I am possessed of," he said, speaking of his fortune, "in small profits, bound by industry and clasped by economy. When he set up a 'chariot', as the phrase went in those days, he put this motto on its doors: 'Small profits do great things.' To the remonstrances of his friends, he said:

"The first king of Bohemia kept his country shoes by him to remind him whence he was taken. I have put a motto on my carriage-doors to remind me to what I am indebted for my prosperity."

When a man who has risen into fame or wealth feels ashamed of having risen from a lower strata in society, and is anxious to kick into oblivion the ladder on which he has mounted, he shows a weakness that detracts from the respect which his success and talents would otherwise command.—SEL.

Most men call fretting a minor fault, a foible, and not a vice. There is no vice except drunkenness, which can so utterly destroy the peace and the happiness of a home.

He only is a well-made man who has a good determination.—EMERSON.